

Message Text

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44

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEAE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAB-01

IO-11 OMB-01 /070 W

----- 111837

P R 121545Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 595

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN FRG

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 1840

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR IS SY LE

SUBJ: INITIAL ISRAELI REACTION TO LEBANESE MILITARY COUP

1. ISRAEL IS ADOPTING A WAIT-AND-SEE POSTURE TOWARD DEVELOPMENTS IN LEBANON FOLLOWING THE MILITARY COUP OF MARCH 11. SENIOR LEADERS HAVE CONFINED THEMSELVES TO BRIEF AND CAUTIOUS REMARKS AND WIDESPREAD VIEW IS THAT THE ATTITUDE OF SYRIA WILL BE CRITICAL.

2. IDF LEBANON ANALYST BRIEFED DATT MORNINGOF MARCH 12. ANALYST SAID THERE WAS AN ENTIRELY NEW SITUATION IN LEBANON, AND BELIEVED THAT SYRIA REMAINED THE KEY TO FUTURE EVENTS THERE. THE ATTEMPTED MILITARY COUP TOGETHER WITH THE CEASE-FIRE PUTS SYRIAN PRESTIGE ON THE LINE AND ASAD MIGHT HAVE TO DECIDE QUICKLY WHETHER TO COMMIT SYRIAN FORCES IN ORDER TO SAVE THE SITUATION. THE IDF THEREFORE ASSUMES THAT THE SYRIAN LEADERSHIP IS CAREFULLY EXAMINING WHETHER THE COUP WILL SUCCEED, WHETHER THE COUP LEADERS WILL ABIDE BY THE SYRIAN CEASE-FIRE ARRANGEMENT, CONFIDENTIAL

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AND WHETHER THE COUP WILL GAIN THE SUPPORT OF ALL FACTIONS

WITHIN THE ARMED FORCES. THE IDF ASSUMES THAT SYRIA WOULD PREFER TO USE PLA UNITS TO ACHIEVE ITS AIM IN SYRIA, BUT WONDERS IF PLA STRENGTH IS SUFFICIENT TO CONTROL EVENTS. THE IDF SEES NO SYRIAN ROLE IN THE COUP ITSELF.

3. MFA AREA SPECIALIST (VERED) HAS TOLD US SHE FINDS INFORMATION OUT OF LEBANON STILL TOO CONFUSING TO DRAW FIRM CONCLUSIONS. SHE DOES SEE SOME EVIDENCE THAT GENERAL AHDAB MOVED WITH THE PRIOR KNOWLEDGE OF SOME POLITICAL FIGURES, INCLUDING KARAME. IN THIS CASE, SHE SAID SHE WOULD EXPECT THAT THE INITIAL AIMS OF THE EFFORT WOULD INCLUDE FORCING FRANGIEH TO RESIGN AND INDUCING THE KHATIB REBELS BACK INTO THE ARMY.

4. STILL NO INDICATION OF INCREASED ALERT OF ISRAELI FORCES.
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Message Attributes

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